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Remarks


The Office Action rejects claims 6, 8, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by Howarth et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

It is well-settled law that in order for a prior art reference to anticipate a patent claim, the reference must disclose each and every element of the claim at issue. In the present case, Applicant's claim 16, from which all the other claims depend, specifies a fuel reformer that has a mat material downstream of a housing inlet that provides a mixing zone (see element 80 of Applicant's Figures 1 and 2), and a reforming zone *downstream of the mat material* and mixing zone that comprises a reformer catalyst substrate. The Howarth et al reference discloses a conventional mat material that *surrounds* a catalyst substrate in order to secure the substrate inside a catalytic converter housing, as is well-known in the art. There is no disclosure in the reference (or in the secondary Eldridge reference) of a catalyst substrate *downstream* of a mat material, nor is there any disclosure of a mixing zone fluidly coupled to and *downstream* of the mat material. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 6, 8, and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by Howarth et al, and the rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Howarth et al in view of Edridge, should be withdrawn.

As the application appears to be otherwise in condition for allowance, Applicants respectfully request early action toward that end.

If there are any additional charges or overpayments with respect to this Response, please charge or credit them to Deposit Account No. 50-0831 maintained by Applicants' attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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